

Hill, (Sir) George Francis
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southern Arabia

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By

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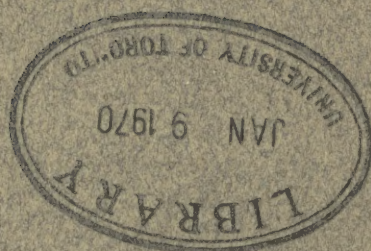
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THE ANCIENT COINAGE OF SOUTHERN ARABIA

By G. F. HILL

Read May 5, 1915

THE ancient coinage of Southern Arabia is one of the most obscure branches of numismatics. In origin it is Greek ; but in development it is Semitic. For the proper study of it a numismatist who is equally well equipped on the Greek and Semitic sides is required ; and such a scholar has yet to be discovered. What is more, the study of South Arabian epigraphy is at present in a somewhat inchoate stage ; vast quantities of inscriptions have been discovered, but only partly published ; an extraordinarily bitter personal feud, with wide ramifications, has done anything but quicken progress ; and of the scholars who have devoted themselves to this branch of archaeology, only one, Mordtmann, has paid serious attention to the coins. In fact, the divorce between numismatics and archaeology is as painfully evident here as in any other place. That must be the excuse for me, as a numismatist with hardly the most rudimentary Semitic equipment, if I venture to deal with the subject ; my wish is merely to put the numismatic material together in a form in which Semitic scholars may be able to deal with it effectively.

According to Strabo,¹ whose information is based on Eratosthenes, there were four leading tribes in occupation of Southern Arabia, or rather of that portion which may be described as lying over against Aethiopia. First there are the Minaeans, in the part near the Red Sea, with their chief town Karna or Karnana ; adjoining them, the Sabaeans, with their metropolis Mariaba ; third, the Katabanians, who extend to the Straits and the crossing of the Arabian Gulf ; their royal city is called Tamna ; and farthest to the East, the Chatramotites, whose city is Sabata. The absence of the Himyarites from this list is due to the fact that they did not rise to power until after the time of Eratosthenes.

¹ xvi. 768.

Hitherto the coins of Southern Arabia have always been classed together as 'Himyarite'. It will be seen that the greater part of them must be divided between Sabaeans and Himyarites, and also that there is ground for distinguishing two small groups of coins, one attributable to the Minaeans, the other to the Katabanians (people of Kataban), although this latter group can only be regarded as subordinate to the main Himyarite series. Three out of the four tribes mentioned by Strabo are thus provided with a coinage.

Since the rise of the Himyarites to power probably did not take place before the middle of the second century B.C., when their capital at Sapphar regia (*Safar*, near *Yerim*) superseded the old Sabaean capital at Mariaba (*Marib*), the earliest series of the coins with which we are concerned should strictly be regarded as Sabaean rather than Himyarite. Nevertheless, the chronology is so uncertain, and the series are interlaced in so curious a way, that it is very difficult to draw any line between them. Roughly speaking, we may assume that the earliest coins, which are direct imitations of the earlier Attic coinage, belong to the Sabaean period, while the later, flat coins (of that which we may for convenience call the *San'â* class),¹ with a reverse type derived from the Attic coinage of the 'New Style', the small coins with names and heads of various kings, and the 'bucranium' series must certainly belong to the Himyarite period. But there are certain single coins, or small groups, which, although in fabric and types they look fairly early, seem by their monograms and inscriptions to be intimately connected with the *San'â* class, apparently so much later.

The following is an attempt at a provisional classification of the various series.

I. IMITATIONS OF THE OLDER ATTIC TYPES

a. Obv. Head of Athena. *Rev.* Owl, with olive-spray, crescent, and AΘE, more or less blundered; traces of incuse square on some specimens (Plate I. 2).

The largest coins which appear to belong to this class are reproductions of the Athenian tetradrachm; the only specimens known to me are at Berlin.² One is countermarked on the obverse with X

¹ Since the great majority, if not all, of the known specimens in silver seem to have come from the great hoard discovered there and described by Schlumberger, *Le Trésor de San'â* (Paris, 1880).

² D. H. Müller and J. W. Kubitschek, *Südarabische Altertümer* (Vienna), 1889, p. 76, I, nos. 474 and 183-7. I cite this work henceforward as 'M. u. K.'. All these coins were brought from South Arabia by Glaser or Mordtmann.

(Sabaean η) and Δ ; another has something like a Sabaean monogram scratched on the reverse.

But these large coins are quite exceptional, and we are justified in regarding as the ordinary unit the smaller coins of 5.55 grm. maximum.¹

These units all show the Sabaean \beth on the cheek of Athena; the halves, when legible, are similarly marked with \beth ; the quarters with η ;² the eighths with ψ . The same system appears to be followed on the series next to be described. On the $\text{\textcircled{S}}$ coins, however, we find the halves marked sometimes with \beth , sometimes with η , while a cross (which may be meant for η , though that is not certain) occurs on the reverse of some of the $\text{\textcircled{S}}$ units which have \beth on the obverse. The $\text{\textcircled{b}}$ ($\text{\textcircled{5}}$) which is found on one half (Schlumberger, Pl. III. 56) may perhaps be really Γ ($\text{\textcircled{3}}$). Schlumberger has suggested that the \beth is the initial of Nejran (*Néγpava*). But if he is right, it would seem to follow that the other letters mentioned above are also mint-initials,³ and that, at least in the earliest period, the four different denominations were issued from four different mints. If this seems improbable, it is, for the following reasons, equally difficult to accept the view, which suggests itself upon the consideration of the earlier series, that the letters are the initials of denominations. Schlumberger records (p. 22) an early Attic *tetradrachm* which has been countermarked with a Sabaean \beth ,⁴ and, as already stated, the \beth is found on halves of the $\text{\textcircled{S}}$ class. We have also seen that the Berlin Museum possesses⁵ a piece of about the weight of the Attic *tetradrachm* (16.95 grm.), imitated from the earlier Attic types, with two countermarks, viz. χ and Δ , of which the former may be the Himyarite η ; and this letter, as we have seen, is found on the quarters.

The coins of the class with which we are dealing bear nothing Sabaean or Himyarite about them save their style and the letter on the cheek of Athena (the 'tetradrachms' at Berlin being without even the latter distinguishing mark of Arab origin). They still retain traces of the incuse square, and were dated by Head⁶ about

¹ The standard is discussed below (pp. 23-4).

² Except one published by Mordtmann, *Num. Zeit.*, 1880, p. 293, Taf. V, no. ii, which appears to have \circ (γ).

³ For \beth , the city of $\text{\textcircled{b}}$, associated in an inscription with Nejran, has been suggested (see *C. I. S.*, iv. 7).

⁴ It must be remembered that the Sabaean \beth is hardly distinguishable from the same letter in some other Semitic scripts.

⁵ *M. u. K.*, p. 76, no. 474.

⁶ *Num. Chron.*, 1880, p. 310.

400 B.C. It is, however, clear from the treatment of the eye that they are imitated from the comparatively late Attic coins (Plate I. 1) which may themselves be dated to the fourth century (*circa* 393-322 B.C. according to Head).¹ The earliest imitations themselves are scarcely earlier than the third century.²

β. Similar to series α, but slightly broader in fabric and later in style; on the reverse, Sabaeen letter or monogram; traces of incuse square rarely if ever present (Pl. I. 3). The units, halves, and quarters are marked with the same letters as in series α; no eighths seem to be known.

These coins must cover a fairly long period of time; for in proportion to the number of specimens known (the collections in London and Vienna provide all or nearly all of them), the number of varieties is comparatively large, at least nineteen different letters or monograms being represented; while to strike the thirty-eight specimens of the unit in the British Museum alone about twenty-nine obverse and twenty-seven reverse dies were required. The series may be dated to the second century B.C. The lower limit is furnished by the fact that some coins which resemble this series in fabric and style are intimately connected by monograms and inscriptions with the flat coins of the Ṣan'â class.

Some eighteen or nineteen letters or monograms occur on coins of this series; they range from single Sabaeen letters to elaborate monograms. The most remarkable is a group of two signs, one exactly resembling the Sabaeen ̣, the other being forked above, with a wavy tail (Pl. I. 4, 5). The latter has been the subject of considerable discussion. The points to be remembered are: first, that the two signs are frequently found together in a position of importance in lapidary inscriptions; second, that the forked sign is always much larger than the other, which is almost always of the same proportions as the ordinary letters, and may therefore be taken as the letter ̣. An examination of all the evidence makes it fairly clear that the forked sign has some symbolic significance. It is possibly a degenerate pictograph derived from the bucranium and associated with 'Athtar';³ but still more probable appears to me the derivation from the Babylonian twin-dragon sceptre. The earliest example⁴ of the twin-serpent-sceptre *motif* is found on

¹ *Hist. Num.*,² p. 374.

² I do not speak of the 'tetradrachms', having seen none of those at Berlin, but of the units and smaller denominations.

³ This suggestion is not new; see *C. I. S.*, iv, no. 366, p. 12.

⁴ I owe what follows to my colleague, Professor L. W. King.

a libation vase in the Louvre of dark green steatite dedicated by Gudea, patesi of Lagash, to Ningishzida, his patron deity, about 2450 B.C.¹ Ningishzida in his chief aspect was a war-god and a Sumerian prototype of the god Ninib in his later character, whose emblem was the twin lion-headed sceptre; so that the twining serpents with natural heads are the direct ancestors of the lion-headed serpents of the later emblem, as we get it, for instance, on a boundary-stone of Nazimaruttash,² about 1330 B.C. I take it that the wavy form generally assumed by the tail of the Sabaeen sign in question is a relic of the spirals of the serpents' tails.

The other sign, as I have said, is usually if not always represented of the same size as the ordinary letters of the inscription, and is doubtless only 𐩦. Weber and the editors of the *C.I.S.*, however, regard it as a special symbol, the former elaborating a most ingenious theory, which identifies it with the double curved symbol which occurs so frequently upon the later coins (see below). If he were right in this last identification, then (1) the voided and solid forms of the curved symbol must be distinguished, because (2) the solid form, at least, of the curved symbol occurs occasionally *in connexion with and addition to* the group of signs which we are discussing. But that the solid and voided forms of the curved symbol cannot be distinguished in significance is clear from the fact that both are used indifferently in the same context on coins of the Ṣan'â class.

γ. In a small group of coins, comprising two specimens at Vienna,³ one at Paris, and one in the British Museum, we find on the obverse, instead of the head of Athena, a beardless male head with curly hair, in which the Viennese scholars see a resemblance to the portrait of Philetairos on Pergamene coins. There is no letter on the cheek. The owl is more erect than on the series α and β, and ΑΘΕ is absent. The monograms are more elaborate, and there are two on each coin. In spite of the very different drawings of the monograms on the two coins given in the Viennese publication, they appear from the photographs to be meant for the same; that on the right is also the same as appears on the Paris and London coins, which are incomplete on the left. The Paris coin shows a 𐩠 below the right-hand monogram, which thus consists of 𐩡 + 𐩢 + 𐩣 + 𐩤. The left-hand monogram, judging from the photographs, consists of 𐩣 with 𐩠 above;

¹ L. Heuzey, *Catal. des Antiquités chaldéennes*, 1902, p. 280; the same, *Découvertes en Chaldée par E. de Sarzec*, vol. ii, 1912, Pl. 44.

² *Hilprecht Anniversary Volume*, p. 274, Fig. 7.

³ M. u. K., p. 68, II, nos. 1, 2.

name. He points out that the writer of the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* says that part of the coast of Hadramaut and the island Massyra (Sarapidis insula) belonged to Persia, so that Yemen may have been in relation with Persia before Sassanian times. Nevertheless, his reading is improbable for at least two reasons. First, the position of the Yanaf monogram and other details of the design show that the inscription should be read as here printed, and not outwardly. Second, the two letters on the extreme left cannot reasonably be given different values. The general character of the script recalls the Characenian Aramaic.¹ It might accordingly be read נתרחה (g-th-'th-h-h).² It is possible that the inscription indicates the intrusion of some conqueror from the neighbourhood of the Persian Gulf, who ruled in Yemen for a time, and introduced the new style of coinage. But if so, why did he retain the distinctive Sabaeen or Himyarite Yanaf monogram on his coins? Another possibility is that the inscription was added to the coins by a native ruler in order to facilitate commerce with some tribes who used the script in question.

II. IMITATIONS OF THE LATER ATTIC TYPE

(Şan'â class.)

As stated above, the change from the old to the new Attic type probably took place during the reign of a single ruler; nevertheless, for purposes of classification it seems better to keep the two types separate. Head³ dates the coins of the Şan'â class as follows:

Group with Arab head on obv., Aramaic inscription and monograms on rev. (Pl. I. 7, 8). *Circa* 70–40 B.C.

Group with similar obv., monograms only on rev. *Circa* 40–24 B.C.

Group with Augustan head on obv., monograms on rev. (Pl. I. 9).

After *circa* 24 B.C.

This classification is generally much more acceptable than that of Schlumberger.⁴ It is true that the Attic coinage of the New Style by no means came to an end, or was even seriously restricted, under Sulla, as was formerly supposed; we now know that it went on until the time of Augustus. But the rule that a barbarous imitative coinage begins when the supply of originals falls off must not be

¹ See the alphabet given by Drouin, *Rev. Num.*, 1889, Pl. VII.

² Col. Allotte de la Fuÿe partly agrees with this, though he would prefer pp for the last two letters, and thinks the first may possibly be N. Schlumberger has suggested that the inscription may after all be Sabaeen; but it would be odd to find a cursive form like this side by side with monograms showing the ordinary monumental forms.

³ *Num. Chron.*, 1880, p. 310.

⁴ *Le Trésor de San'â* (Paris, 1880).

rigidly interpreted. It would, for instance, be inconsistent to insist on this rule, in order to find a date *post quem* for the earliest Şan'â type, and yet fix the adoption of the later type, with the Augustan head, by the expedition of Aelius Gallus in 24 B.C. But if the rule applies at all here, it is worthy of notice that the supply of the New Style Attic coinage shrank considerably during the periods *circa* 146-100 and 100-86 B.C. According to the latest chronology¹ of these coins we find that in

Class	I, <i>circa</i> 229-197 B.C.,	there are	17 series
„	II, „ 196-187 B.C.,	„	9 „
„	III α , „ 186-147 B.C.,	„	31 „
„	III β , „ 146-100 B.C.,	„	14 „
„	IV α , „ 100-86 B.C.,	„	9 „
„	IV β , „ 86-Augustus	„	30 „

The time of greatest scarcity of Attic coinage was therefore from 146 to 86 B.C., and the date of the beginning of the corresponding Himyarite coinage may fall within this period.

If, on the other hand, ignoring this rule, we seek to associate the reform with some event in Himyarite history, we may find it in the inauguration of the Himyarite era in 115 B.C.,² a date which, curiously enough, corresponds to within a single year with the middle of the period 146-86 B.C. It appears to me quite reasonable, on grounds of style, to place the accession of the ruler represented by the Aramaic inscription about this time, and to date the Şan'â coins with that inscription during the period *circa* 115-80 B.C. The other Şan'â coins with the Arab head may then be dated *circa* 80-24 B.C.; and the Augustan type during the last quarter of the century.

The head on the obverse of the pre-Augustan Şan'â coins is seen by its head-dress to be that of an Arab king or god. The encircling of the type by a wreath has been referred by Schlumberger to Seleucid coins,³ and the strange border made up of small vases to the fillet-border on the same series; and, as we shall see, there are no chronological objections to this view. The resemblance of the ringleted head to certain heads on Ptolemaic and Roman coins is doubtless purely a coincidence. It is indeed remarkable that there are so few signs on the coinage of this district of that Ptolemaic influence which is so evident in Nabataea. Possibly, however, the

¹ Head, *Hist. Num.*,², pp. 380 ff.

² Glaser, *Skizze der Gesch. Arabiens*, i, as quoted by Mordtmann in *Z.D.M.G.*, xlv (1890), p. 175.

³ Cp. the coins of Demetrius I (162-150 B.C.): B. M. C. *Seleucid Kings*, Pl. XIV. 2.

weight of the gold coin discussed below may point to a connexion with Egypt.

It is exceedingly difficult to decide whether the head¹ represents a god or a ruler. The head on one coin (Plate I. 7) is curiously like that of Obodas III of Nabataea in general effect. That on another (Plate I. 8) shows a very different individuality. It is probable that both gods and rulers would be represented in the same sort of head-dress, even to the wearing of the ornament (globe-in-crescent) which appears on the head in some specimens, and which is doubtless the symbol of the moon-god.²

There are about fourteen different groups of the coins of the Ṣan'ā class, falling into two main divisions according to the type of the obverse, which is (a) an Arab head, (b) a head derived from the coins of Augustus.

(a) With Arab head.

Of these, the group containing the unique gold coin must first be mentioned. The British Museum specimen (Pl. I. 6) is the only known gold coin of this class; another gold piece at Berlin is catalogued by Müller and Kubitschek³ in their sixth class, i.e. among the later coins with two heads. Its reverse is described as a clumsy attempt at a cornucopiae; can this be the curved sign which we shall discuss presently?

The weight of our coin is 2.48 grm. = 38.3 grn. This may perhaps be regarded as one-third of a Phoenician didrachm of 7.44 grm. It is possible that Egyptian gold coins may have been in circulation in Yemen. As we know nothing of the ratio prevailing between gold and silver, it is wiser not to speculate on the question of the value of this gold coin in silver units.

Although it does not bear the mysterious Aramaic inscription, this coin is connected with the groups which do bear it by its fabric, the Yanaf monogram, and the curved sign⁴ which appears in so many varying forms on the remaining Himyarite coins. Some of

¹ The coins are sometimes so badly double-struck as to give the appearance of two heads jugate. This is seen, for instance, in a British Museum specimen; and doubtless the coin in the E. F. Weber Collection (Hirsch, *Katal.*, xxi. 4331) was similar.

² Compare the coins of Carrhae. The globe in a crescent is found on various inscribed Himyaritic stones, as *C. I. S.*, iv. 226, 285, 362.

³ p. 78, no. 216, wt. 0.31 grm.; i.e. $\frac{1}{3}$ of our coin.

⁴ I regard all the forms, whether voided (ribbon-like) or solid, as variations of the same sign; for both voided and solid forms occur in precisely the same relation to the other details of monogram, &c. Otherwise, since in one series we find the solid form on one side of the coin and the voided form on the other, it might have seemed that they represent two different signs.

them are reproduced in Fig. 1. This same sign, often resembling a sort of ribbon, is found also in lapidary inscriptions,¹ and has been regarded as a non-significant terminal or initial sign, or even as a misunderstood or degenerate cornucopiae, derived from a symbol on some Attic coin which started the fashion. Neither explanation will stand in view of the fact that the object occurs alone as a symbol in the field of certain coins, and of the importance which is assigned to it in the lapidary inscriptions. The editors of the *C. I. S.*² see in it the symbol of a deity, possibly Ilmaqah or Ilmuqah.³ It occurs on a remarkable little inscribed stone,⁴ a dedication to 'Athtar and Saḥr, with four other symbols, thus (from r. to l.): 'gazelle-bucranium', dragon's head, curved symbol, a second smaller bucranium, and the standard (?) sign to be discussed later. Since Ilmaqah is not mentioned in this dedication, the curved sign can hardly be regarded as exclusively, if at all, his symbol. Weber's⁵ theory that



Fig. 1.

the voided form of this symbol is only another form of the sign for 𐤎 is not tenable for reasons already given. Prof. L. W. King has here again solved the difficulty, so far as tracing the origin of the object is concerned; for it is exactly like the curved weapon, consisting of three or more strips bound together, which is held, for instance, by King Eannatum on his stele in the Louvre.⁶

It seems doubtful whether the other gold coins which according to rumour have been found in Yemen were Himyaritic. Mordtmann⁷ quotes Cruttenden as saying that rectangular gold coins were often offered for sale by shepherds in the neighbourhood of Marib, and Mohl for the story of the finding in the same place of a chest full of gold coins, which were melted down. There is no reason to suppose that any of these last were Himyaritic rather than Persian or Aethiopic. As to the rectangular gold coins, they must be something otherwise quite unknown; for the gold mohurs of Akbar never, to our knowledge, circulated in those parts.

¹ e. g. M. u. K., Taf. IX. 23; *Brit. Mus.*, Pl. III (in the margin); 36, Pl. XVII; *C. I. S.*, iv. 2, Tab. IV, no. 393.

² Commentary on iv, no. 366, pp. 11 f.

³ On this deity see D. Nielsen, *Mitt. d. Vorderas. Ges.*, 1909, 4.

⁴ *C. I. S.*, iv. 458. This is in the Marshall Hole Collection at Bulawayo.

⁵ *Hilprecht Anniversary Volume*, pp. 276 f.

⁶ L. Heuzey, *Catal. des Antiquités chaldéennes*, pp. 102 ff.; *Découvertes en Chaldée*, vol. ii, 1912, Pl. 3 bis.

⁷ *Num. Zeit.*, 1880, p. 289.

In the same class as the gold coin must be placed the silver coins at Vienna of the same style, viz. a half (2.38 grm.) and a minute denomination (0.16 grm.).¹ These have the same symbols as the gold, and the larger one, at any rate, is exactly similar in other details (reverse border with pellet in crescent at top). The larger silver denomination has not yet been found.

All the remaining coins of the Şan'â class are of silver, and of fairly good quality.

I do not propose here to go into details, which can only be done satisfactorily with a lavish use of special type. But I may mention the following groups, taking first those which have the Arab head on the obverse. First, the group already discussed with the Yanaf monogram, the blundered remains of AΘE, the Aramaic inscription, and the combination of the curved and forked signs with the letter ̣, which connect this group with the latest groups of the coins imitated from the earlier Attic style, and show that those must come down to a much later period than has usually been supposed. Second, three other groups without the Aramaic inscription, but with the Yanaf and other monograms, one of which may possibly contain the name of Madar, a place in the Hamdan district which contained no less than fourteen fortresses.

Third, two groups on which one of the monograms seems to contain the name Shammar (Shammar Yuhar'ish was king of Saba and Raidan, but seems to belong to a later period).

Fourth, two groups which show a monogram which is generally accepted as giving the name of Yada'il, a name which was borne by no less than five Sabaeen kings; and another monogram which has been read Ḥaḍur, the name of a mountain fortress near Şan'â. But this same monogram occurs on coins which as we shall see were struck at Raidan, so that it is most probably a personal name. It must be remembered that a great many personal and place-names in Himyaritic inscriptions are identical in form, places being named after their founders.

Coming now to (b) the Şan'â coins with the Augustan head on the obverse, we find a group which has the same pair of monograms as those just mentioned, and which is therefore presumably the earliest of this division. There is, however, only one other group in this division (Pl. I. 9), and that bears a monogram which may possibly contain the name of the Sabaeen castle Salḥin, near Marib. This coinage cannot have lasted long.

¹ M. u. K., p. 69, nos. 10 and 8, Taf. XIV. 22 and 19.

III

There remain two more series of Himyaritic or similar coins, that with the names of kings and a head on each side, and that with a human head on one side and an animal's head on the other. The latter¹ (Pl. I. 10, 11) may be dealt with first, since, poor in character though they be, they have certain points of connexion with the Ṣan'â class, the monograms on some of them being found also on coins of the Ṣan'â class. All the coins of this class show the curved sign in two forms, the solid form on the obverse, the voided one on the reverse. The border on the reverse looks like a degenerate descendant of the amphora border of the Ṣan'â class. The other sign, like a standard, on the obverse is probably not a monogram, but some sort of religious symbol. It occurs in the relief of the five symbols dedicated to 'Athtar and Saḥr mentioned above.²

A small coin at Vienna (M. u. K., no. 12, Taf. XIV. 28) omits the ordinary types on both sides, and bears only the monograms or symbols.

The metal of these coins is very poor. One in the British Museum contains practically no visible silver; and there is a large proportion of base coins in the Vienna series.³

The curious type of the reverse is evidently connected with the animals' heads carved on certain of the inscribed stones from Yemen. We have already found them on the Bulawayo stone. Again at Vienna⁴ we find two bucrania, each with a sort of plume between the horns, and a somewhat similar bucranium occurs on a stone at Paris already mentioned.⁵ Stylized bucrania also form the decoration of another Vienna stone.⁶ On an altar in the British Museum⁷ the design is simplified into almost pictographic form.⁸

¹ Coins of this class were first published by Schlumberger in *Rev. Num.*, 1886, pp. 370 f.; then (the same coins) by Casanova, *Rev. Num.*, 1893, p. 183.

² Weber (*Hilprecht Anniversary Volume*, p. 275) recognizes its likeness to the spear-head of Marduk, which however lacks the cross-piece.

³ M. u. K., p. 70, nos. 1-12.

⁴ Hofm. 24; M. u. K., Taf. IX. Müller holds that the bucrania here cannot have anything to do with bull-worship, because the inscription shows that the bucrania are used with a magical object: a complete *non sequitur*. It is to be noted that both on the Bulawayo stone and on that at Vienna the two bucrania are of different sizes, and presumably represent two different deities.

⁵ Casanova in *Rev. Num.*, 1893, p. 181.

⁶ Hofm. 123; M. u. K., Taf. XII.

⁷ Birch, Pl. XV, no. 29.

⁸ For other instances see Weber in *Hilprecht Anniversary Volume*, pp. 271 ff.

Casanova has noticed that the head on the Paris stone resembles a bull in its muzzle and a gazelle in its horns. There can be little doubt that it is the sacred beast of some deity, probably 'Athtar, as Derenbourg has suggested, since on some of the inscriptions it seems to be associated with that deity.¹

IV

There is a general agreement that the Himyarite coins which are inscribed with the full names of a series of kings, and which bear a head on either side, come last in the series in point of time (Pl. I. 12-17). It is also regarded as probable that Prideaux is right in his identification of Karib'il Watar Yehun'im, who struck coins at Raidan, with the Karib'il Watar Yehun'im,² king of Saba and Raidan, known from a number of inscriptions, and with the *Χαριβαήλ* who was reigning at the time when the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* was written, that is about A.D. 70.³ But since there were three rulers called Karib'il, it must be admitted that the last-mentioned equation, of the Charibael of the *Periplus* with the king who struck the coins, is open to dispute. Glaser, for instance,⁴ is inclined to identify the Charibael of the *Periplus* with the first of the kings of the name Karib'il, who apparently bore no extra titles. If this is so, then the Karib'il of the coins must come down a generation or two later. But he will still probably fall within the second century after Christ. It may be remarked that if we have to pick out our king who struck coins from among three kings of the same name, our choice will naturally fall upon that one who, like the Charibael of the *Periplus*, was in close relations with Rome, because such relations seem to indicate commercial prosperity.

Müller assigns the rulers who, like Karib'il, call themselves 'Kings of Saba and Raidan', to the last period of Sabaeen history, ending about A.D. 100. Ilsharḥ Yaḥḍib, king of Saba and Raidan, who is also mentioned in inscriptions, may be the *Ἰλᾶσαρος* who was king

¹ Nielsen, on the other hand, prefers to connect the stylized bull's head on the monuments with Ilmuqah, as the Sabaeen moon-god (*Mitt. Vorderas. Ges.*, 1909, 4, p. 52).

² Of the five kings called Karib'il mentioned in inscriptions, it is the son of Dhamar'ali Bayyin to whom the coins must be attributed (Prideaux and Müller, *Burgen u. Schlösser in Sitzber. Wiener Akad.* 97, p. 994).

³ W. Christ, *Gesch. d. gr. Litt.*³, 672. Glaser (*Die Abessinier*, p. 140) claims to have fixed the date between A.D. 56 and 67. The *Periplus* describes Charibael as reigning over the Homeritae and Sabaeans in his metropolis Sapphar, and being in constant diplomatic relations with Rome.

⁴ Op. cit., p. 37.

of Mariaba or Marsyabae at the time of the expedition of Aelius Gallus (24 B.C.).¹ Since his father Fara' Yanhub is called king of Saba only, the change from Sabaeen to Himyarite domination, with the corresponding transference of the capital from Mariaba to Raidan, may, Müller suggests, have been connected with the expedition of Gallus.² On the other hand, Mordtmann³ would date the transference of the capital about the middle of the first century of our era; and if the coinage inscribed with regal names began with this transference, his date seems to suit the numismatic evidence better.

If the identification of Ilsharḥ with 'Ιλάσαρος is correct, one might expect to find a monogram representing the name on some coin of the Ṣan'â class; but there is nothing of the kind. Another curious fact is that of the kings whose names can be read in full on the coins so few seem to be mentioned in the inscriptions.⁴ It must, however, be remembered that many more inscriptions remain to be published. It is only nine years since the inscription containing the names of two Katabanian rulers, to whom as we shall see coins can be assigned, was first made known.

Longpérier sees a general resemblance of the coins of the class now under consideration to those of the Characenian Arabs of the first and second centuries of our era,⁵ and suggests as the inferior limit for the coinage the breaking of the dam of Marib, which he supposes to have happened in the second century. But the date of this critical event is extraordinarily uncertain.⁶

This much is certain, that all these small coins, showing little change of style, belong to a comparatively restricted period. It is highly improbable that they should overlap with the large flat coins of the Ṣan'â class; the non-numismatic evidence as to the date of Karib'il points to the second half of the first century after Christ; and since the tendency to a scyphate fabric, perceptible in these

¹ Strab., xvi. 782.

² Cp. Müller in *Z.D.M.G.*, xxxvii (1883), pp. 10, 11. But it is doubtful whether the titulature of the kings on these inscriptions is so rigid that we can base an argument of this kind on it.

³ *Z.D.M.G.*, xxxi, p. 72.

⁴ Cp. Glaser, *Die Abessinier*, p. 32 n.

⁵ There is no resemblance to the Characenian coinage in fabric.

⁶ Some authorities, as Redhouse (*The Pearl-Strings*, vol. iii, 1908, p. 7), place it in the time of the Achaemenidae; Sale, soon after the time of Alexander the Great; Caussin de Perceval, about A.D. 120; de Sacy, about A.D. 150-170; and Glaser, not before A.D. 543! Of course there may have been more than one breaking of the dam; but that which caused the dispersion of the Arabs was the one that mattered.

coins, is a sign of decadence, we cannot reasonably date any of the kings who struck them much earlier.

On the whole we shall not be far wrong in assigning the coinage of this class to a period beginning about A.D. 50, and lasting about a century.

The following is an attempt at the description and classification of this regal coinage.¹

The general types of the coins are :

- i. *Obv.* Head of the usual Himyarite type, with ringlets, usually with a monogram behind it.
Rev. Smaller head of the same type, between two monograms; above, king's name; below, mint-name.
- ii. Generally similar to i, but without any king's name. (See M. u. K., Taf. XIV. 36, 37, 39 a, 40, 41, 42, 44, 46.)
- iii. *Obv.* Monogram.
Rev. As in ii.
(See M. u. K., Taf. XIV. 38, 39.)

The second and third types are confined to small denominations and, so far as I know, are represented only in the Vienna Cabinet among the coins from the Glaser Expedition, with the exception of a single specimen of the second type in the British Museum.

The two heads on the two sides of the coin are so much alike² that it seems natural to assume that they both represent persons of the same class; that is to say, they are both human beings or else both deities. The inscriptions sometimes mention two brothers reigning jointly, but if the two heads on the coins represent joint rulers, it is strange that the name of only one is inscribed, and that too against the smaller head on the reverse. That smaller head, since the king's name is written against it, may be regarded as representing the reigning king. Is the larger head on the obverse the founder of the dynasty? Or have we here merely a repetition

¹ The references to Mordtmann are to his useful article in *Num. Zeit.*, 1880, where (pp. 307-316) he classifies this coinage under seven heads. To avoid confusion, it may be remarked that he calls the convex side obverse, the concave side reverse; but the convex side was obviously the anvil side, and therefore the obverse, of the coin. Glaser (*Die Abessinier*, pp. 32 n., 37) speaks of coins bearing the name 'Jaḥmal', who may possibly be the Ilṣharḥ Yahm(?) . . . of the inscription Glaser 686. I have not been able to trace any specimens of this coin.


² Mordtmann, p. 308, says that the head on the rev. (his obv.) wears a wreath; but the distinction certainly does not hold in most cases. Longpérier (*Rev. Num.*, 1868, p. 173) takes the two heads to represent the reigning king and a subordinate prince.

of the process which it is suggested took place on the Nabataean coinage, so that both heads represent the same person, the head on the reverse being repeated from the obverse when a type was required to take the place of the original owl?¹

i. Coins with kings' names

α. Karib'il Yehun'im Watar (כרבאל יהנעם ותר), son of Dhamar'ali Bayyin² (Pl. I. 12). The coins were first identified by Prideaux,³ who showed that the monogram on the obverse is the surname Watar,⁴ which the king bears in the lapidary inscriptions.

On his no. 2 Mordtmann reads a ה in the border above the head, and behind it a monogram consisting of the letters ג, ז, ד, נ. This contains the same elements as the names of two other kings who struck coins ('Amdan or 'Umdan). Since it cannot be a place-name (the mint-name being given on the other side), or another surname of the king, we may assume that it and the other monograms on the reverse represent magistrates of some kind (possibly one of them may be an eponym). Or it may represent the man who actually became king afterwards, in a subordinate capacity. So far it has not been possible to discover any definite rule about the use of monograms on these coins.

On the reverse, the king's second name is sometimes written without the *ain*. The mint-name is always רידן, Raidan, the castle of Şaphar; the regular title of the rulers of this period is מלך סבא וִדְרִידן, king of Saba and Dhu-Raidan.⁵ In front of the head is always the sign  (found also in slightly varying forms on coins of all the other kings of this period except Yeda'ab Yanaf, Shahar

¹ A somewhat similar problem arises in regard to the two heads on Axumite coins, and is discussed by Littmann (*Deutsche Aksum-Expedition*, i, p. 46). But there the two heads differ in their dress, one being crowned.

² *C. I. S.*, iv. 372; cp. 37; Müller, *Burgen*, as above, p. 994.

³ Müller, loc. cit.; Prideaux, *J. A. S. B.*, vol. 1, 1881, p. 98. Others are published by Mordtmann, p. 307; *M. u. K.*, p. 72, nos. 16, 17; p. 77, nos. 224, 483 and 481 (but the last two are Mordtmann's specimens).

⁴ This solution of the monogram was found independently by Mordtmann, p. 308.

⁵ ΤΟΥ ΡΑΕΙΔΑΝ in the famous inscription of Aeizanas, *C. I. G.*, iii. 5128. Hommel, in the *Enzyklopädie des Islām*, i. 395, says that the kings took their territorial title from 'the mountain Raidan near the Kattabanian capital Tamna' to the SE. of Ma'rib'. But see M. Hartmann, *Der Islamische Orient*, ii, pp. 168 f. There seems no reason to reject the statement of Hamdani that Raidan was the castle of Şaphar.

Hilal, and Waraw'il Ghailan). This appears to be not a monogram, but some kind of symbol, analogous to the religious symbols on the coins of the Šan'ā and bucranium classes; for it occurs in inscriptions.¹ On the left of the head, the British Museum specimens show monograms, which probably occur also on other specimens, although they have not been noticed. One of these consists apparently of \aleph and \beth (or ι and \beth). Mordtmann (p. 314) describes it as having marks in the body of the rectangle which he takes for ι , thus reading it as $\aleph\iota$, which is the name (1) of a place where the god Ilmaqah was worshipped; (2) of a god, perhaps the sun-god called *Αἰμωῦ* by the Nabataeans. But among the many instances of this monogram which occur on coins of this class I have seen no trace of the interior signs.² It is noticeable also that the rectangular part of the monogram shows no signs of incurving sides, as the Himyarite \beth normally does. The interpretation must therefore remain uncertain.

There seems to be no possibility of deciding whether the other kings, whose coins remain to be described, are earlier or later than Karib'il.

β. 'Amdan (or 'Umdan) Yehuqbiḏ (עמרן יהקבץ)³ (Pl. I. 13). Specimens of the coins of this ruler were first published by Mordtmann⁴ and Prideaux.⁵ One of Mordtmann's specimens has no monogram (or an obscure one) on the obverse; on the other we find a monogram which he resolves into $\iota + \aleph + \eta + \theta + \zeta + \gamma$.⁶ On the British Museum specimens we have four different monograms, one consisting of $\psi + \eta + \rho + \beta + \zeta$ (i.e. in all but the first letter the same as the king's name); another apparently $\iota + \eta + \beth$ (?); a third = $\iota + \eta + \beta$ (?); and a fourth consisting of $\aleph + \eta + \beta + \gamma$ (the double slanting line on the right is not quite certain). On the reverse, we have the sign Φ , and on two out of four specimens the monogram which Mordtmann reads as $\aleph\iota$. The mint is always Raidan.

γ. 'Amdan (or 'Umdan) Bayyin (עמרן בן) (Pl. I. 14). The coins with this name are usually all attributed to the same ruler, but it

¹ Mordtmann, p. 309.


² An exception may be Mordtmann's no. 9, Taf. V. 9; but may not the marks be due to accident?



³ Glaser (*Die Abessinier*, p. 32 n.), having found an inscription (567) with the mutilated name . . . n Bayyin Yehuqb . . ., suggests that this king probably, though not certainly, corresponds 'dem 'Amdān (*sic*) Bajjān Juhakbidh der Münzen'. But what coins are there of any 'Amdan with both these titles?

⁴ p. 310.

⁵ *J.A.S.B.*, 1881, p. 99, Pl. X. 3, 4, 5. See also *M. u. K.*, p. 77, nos. 487 and 477 (Mordtmann's specimens).

⁶ Kubitschek's drawing of the monogram, p. 78, note 1, Fig. 16, does not entirely bear this out.

is to be observed that they may be divided into two groups, according to the presence or absence of the Yanaf monogram .

Coins were first published by Prideaux and Mordtmann.¹ Taking first those with the Yanaf monogram (which are the less numerous), we find that they are on the whole better executed and of better quality than the others. The border on the obverse resembles a serpent.² The mint is always Raidan; and the sign on the reverse takes the form  or .

On the other hand, those without the Yanaf monogram, besides being as a rule of poorer work and alloy, include smaller denominations, and seem to belong to a later stage of development. On the obverse we find a number of monograms. One of these can be read סלחין, with which compare the name of the Sabaeen castle Salḥin (see above, p. 11). Another is the monogram of הַדִּיר (Ḥaḍūr) already discussed.

The improbability that these monograms can represent places, since the mint-name appears on the other side, has already been pointed out.

The mint of all these coins is Raidan, with one exception which is of barbarous workmanship, and has the mint-name Ṣait (צֵיט).³

The differences noted above seem to point to a distinction between two rulers, an earlier, 'Amdan Bayyin Yanaf, and a later, 'Amdan Bayyin; but they are probably not separated by any great interval.

δ. Tha'ran Ya'ub (תארן יעב) (Pl. I. 15). The surname is sometimes written without the *ain*. A king Tha'ran, son of Dhamar'ali Yuhabir, son of Yasar Yuhaṣdiq, is known from an inscription.⁴ Longpérier and Mordtmann, who first published his coins,⁵ misread his name, the form of which is however quite clear on other specimens. Of the monograms occurring on the obverses one may be read either Yarim or Riyam. The former is the name of a place in Yemen, and also of a Sabaeen king Yerim or Yarim 'Aiman.⁶ ריִם on the other hand is a surname ('the exalted'), and this interpretation is preferred by Mordtmann, although, as he admits, it is used by Minaean rulers, whereas the Sabaeans prefer the equivalent

¹ See Mordtmann, pp. 310, 311; M. u. K., p. 71, nos. 8-15, Taf. XIV. 32-5; p. 77, nos. 194, 192, 225-31. It is a curious fact that one of the British Museum specimens was acquired by Dr. Buresch in the Hermos plain near Sardes.

² Cp. M. u. K., Taf. XIV. 33, and the specimens in the British Museum.

³ Vienna, M. u. K., p. 73, no. 1.

⁴ C. I. S., iv. 457.

⁵ Rev. Num., 1868, p. 169; Num. Zeit., 1880, p. 312. See also M. u. K., p. 71, nos. 1-7.



⁶ C. I. S., iv. 401.

ינף (Yanaf). We have also two monograms comprising respectively the letters ו+ה+ר+מ and ה+ר+מ. These two, being evidently meant for the same name, show that the last letter of the name must be ו, since that is not present in both. Madhuw (מדהו) is the name of a deity.¹

The mint is always Raidan. The head on the obverse occasionally bears a letter on its cheek in characteristic Himyarite manner; ה on one in the British Museum, נ on a coin published by Longpérier.

ע. Shamnar Yehun'im (שמנר יהנעם) (Pl. I. 16). So, rather than Shamdar, I read the name on the rare coins in the British Museum and in Mordtmann's collection; his illustration does not, at any rate, conflict with this reading.

On the obverse of these coins we have a monogram נ+ר,² and on one of the two known coins the cheek is marked with ע. The mint is Raidan.

Omitting a broken coin with an apparently blundered inscription,³ we have now given the list of all the coins bearing kings' names which have the characteristic sign  or . The coins with kings' names on which this sign is absent are much fewer in number.

ז. Yeda'ab Yanaf (ידעאב ינף) (Pl. I. 17). Mordtmann points out that the name Yeda'ab occurs in inscriptions with the surnames Bayyin and Ghailan, but these are kings of Hadramaut;⁴ on the other hand the name is found with the surname Dhubain (דבין) as the name of the son of a Katabanian priest-king, and we shall see later that the other rulers who struck coins at the same mint (Ḥarb) as this Yeda'ab were Katabanians. The name also occurs among the deities and kings invoked at the end of certain inscriptions mostly found at Kharibat Se'ud,⁵ a day's journey north-east of Marib. All Glaser's⁶ Katabanian inscriptions came from the country between Marib and Shabwat, and they give as the name of the chief city תמנע, which is the Tamna of Eratosthenes, the Thomna of Pliny, the Thumna of Ptolemy, and, according to Glaser, the modern Tamna' in Wadi Baihan el Qaşab. Now Eratosthenes says that the

¹ Mordtmann u. Müller, *Sabäische Denkmäler*, pp. 80, 102.

² This, and not the simple letter נ, seems to occur on Mordtmann's specimen as on ours; on his, the head on the obverse appears to be turned to l., not to r.

³ M. u. K., p. 72, no. 18. I have already noted that Glaser (*Die Abessinier*, p. 32 n., p. 37) speaks of coins with the name Jaḥmal, and that I have not been able to trace these coins, of which he gives no details.

⁴ *C.I.S.*, iv. 155, 308; cp. Mordtmann in *Z.D.M.G.*, lii, p. 399.

⁵ Halévy, 630, 631, 632, 635; *Z.D.M.G.*, xxx, p. 291, no. 5.

⁶ See his *Abessinier*, p. 112.

Katabanian country, which he mentions between the Sabaeans and the people of Hadramaut, came down to the straits of Bab-el-Mandeb. It looks therefore as if in his time the Katabanians occupied a good deal of the country which afterwards belonged to the Himyarites. There has been a general tendency to look for the capital Tamna somewhere in the south-west corner of the peninsula; but it is difficult to reject the evidence of the inscriptions.

Now the coins of Yeda'ab Yanaf bear in their exergue, in the place where the mint-name normally comes, the name Ḥarb. Mordtmann has accordingly suggested that Ḥarb may be Kharibat Se'ud, the place where the inscriptions with the name of Yeda'ab were found, and that both may be Caripeta, the furthest point reached by Aelius Gallus.¹ Kharibat, however, merely means 'ruins', and there are various places of that name.

The name Ḥar(i)b, again, is not singular; Manzoni marks one place of the name about 55 km. E. by N. of Ṣan'â on the way to Marib; and there is another more important Ḥarib south-east of Marib, about half-way to Nisab. Since the Katabanian coins were struck at Ḥarb, is it not probable that it may have borne the same relation to the capital Tamna as Raidan did to Ṣafar, i.e. that it may have been the stronghold of the Katabanian kings?

The mint of Ḥarb was also used by two other kings, who can be identified in a most satisfactory way with kings mentioned in inscriptions, and are represented each by a unique coin:

η. Shahar (or Shahir) Hilal (שָׁהַר הִלָּל). This is presumably the Katabanian king, known from an inscription. The coin proves that Weber is right in correcting the reading of his second name from Yalil or Yagil to Hilal.² His third name was Yuhargib (יְהֻרְגִיב).

The only known coin of this ruler is in the Vienna Cabinet,³ and weighs 0.77 grm.

θ. Waraw'il Ghailan (וַרְאָוִל עַיְלָן), whose third name was Yehun'im, the son of Shahar Hilal, just mentioned. The inscription on the coin is incomplete,⁴ but it is quite certain that it is to be read

¹ Glaser (*Skizze*, ii, p. 58) is inclined to identify Pliny's Caripeta with *Kharibat Sirwah* (a long day's journey west of Marib). In the same work he distinguishes Strabo's Marsyabae from Mariaba, and thinks that Gallus never reached the latter; but in his *Abessinier* (p. 35 n.) he seems not disinclined to admit that Marsyabae is Marib.


² D. Nielsen, 'Neue katabanische Inschriften' in *Mitt. Vorderas. Ges.*, 1906, 4, p. 17; O. Weber, 'Studien zur süd-arab. Altertumskunde', ib., 1907, 2, pp. 12 ff.

³ M. u. K., p. 73 β), no. 4.

⁴ Ibid., p. 78, no. 191. Berlin, wt. 1.52 grm.

as Waraw'il Ghailan, the Katabanian king who is known from the same inscription as his son Shahar.¹

The solitary coin of this ruler is in the Berlin cabinet, and weighs 1.52 grm.

The above identifications with Katabanian rulers perhaps justify us in regarding the group of coins without the characteristic mark  as distinctively Katabanian. And if our dating of these coins to the period A.D. 50–150 is approximately correct, Glaser's theory² that Kataban was absorbed into Hadramaut in the second century B.C., and that at the time of the expedition of Aelius Gallus the Katabanian kingdom had ceased to exist, needs considerable revision.

ii. *Coins with two heads, but without the king's name*

With the exception of a single piece in the British Museum, all the coins of this class known to me are in the Vienna Cabinet. They all belong to small denominations, and it may be assumed that the absence of the king's name is merely due to lack of space. They fall into five groups, distinguished mainly by the inscriptions in the exergues, where on the fully inscribed coins the mint-name is usually placed. These five inscriptions are (1) רידן (Raidan), (2) נעם (Na'am), (3) יעב (Ya'ub), (4) יהבר (Yuhabir), and (5) חרב (Ḥarb).

If we assume, as Müller and Kubitschek assume (and it is difficult to take any other view), that the names in the exergue of the reverses of these five groups represent mints, it is strange that three out of the five mints should be known only from these poor little coins. Ḥarb itself may be a man's name.³ As to Na'am, it can be both a man's name and the name of a castle.⁴ Ya'ub and Yuhabir, on the other hand, seem to be known, apart from their occurrence on these coins, only as surnames of kings of Saba and Raidan.⁵ One of these kings, Tha'ran Ya'ub, struck coins at Raidan. The other, Dhamar'ali Yuhabir, was the father of a Tha'ran, presumably this same Tha'ran Ya'ub. This is a remarkable coincidence, if it is nothing more. We have to choose between two alternatives: either the names Yuhabir and Ya'ub on these coins represent not mints, but the two kings in question, or they represent mint-places which

¹ D. Nielsen and O. Weber, as above.


² *Die Abessinier*, pp. 77, 114 f.


³ See Mordtmann u. Müller, *Sabäische Denkmäler*, p. 100; *C. I. S.*, iv. 345.

⁴ *C. I. S.*, iv. 154; cp. iv. 21 and 1 Chron. iv. 15. The name is a place or clan name (*C. I. S.*, iv. 37, v. 4; 74, v. 18; 117, v. 1; *Z.D.M.G.*, xxix, p. 227; cp. Hartmann, *Der islam. Orient*, ii, p. 291).

⁵ Tha'ran Ya'ub, whose coins are described above, and Dhamar'ali Yuhabir, *C. I. S.*, iv. 365 and 457.

were founded by and named after these kings, just as the fortress of Na'am was named after its founder Na'am.¹


The Yanaf monogram occurs on the Raidan coins, and suggests that they may have been struck by 'Amdan Bayyin Yanaf; it is less reasonable to attribute them to Yeda'ab Yanaf because that king's coins were struck not at Raidan but at Ḥarb, and do not bear the sign .

On the Na'am coins we find, combined with the sign , the letters ' and ה. These might possibly stand for יהנעם (Yehun'im), the surname of Karib'il and Shamnar, or יהקבד (Yehuqbid), the surname of 'Amdan. It is a curious coincidence that the supposed mint-name נעם in the exergue of these coins, if read in continuation of the two isolated letters, gives the name Yehun'im.

The Ya'ub coin may conjecturally be attributed to Tha'ran Ya'ub, and the Yuhabir coin to Dhamar'ali Yuhabir, his father, even if we suppose the names in their exergues to be the names of mints; for we must then assume that these mints were established by the persons whose names they bore.

The Ḥarb coin bears a monogram of ' and ה, which may represent Yeda'ab, whose fully inscribed coins were struck at Ḥarb.

The above attributions may appear to be ultra-ingenious, and they are only submitted for the consideration of scholars more competent to decide.

iii. Finally, there are two coins which bear on the obverse a monogram, on the reverse a head, the mint-name Raidan, and the sign .² One of the monograms is already familiar to us from coins of the Ṣan'â class (above, p. 11) and of 'Amdan Bayyin (above, p. 18). Possibly the coins were struck by the last-named.

Here also may be mentioned a coin which Kubitschek has placed in a seventh class by itself.³ On the obverse it has an elaborate monogram; on the reverse the word Watar, and the curved symbol below it. It is natural to give this coin to Karib'il Watar Yehun'im; but it must be remembered that there were other kings bearing the name Watar.⁴

¹ *C. I. S.*, iv. 154.

² *M. u. K.*, p. 72, nos. 24, 25, Taf. XIV. 38, 39. On the second coin there is another sign to the left of the monogram, but it is half obliterated; if Kubitschek reads it right, it is the forked sign of the earlier coins.

³ p. 74, viii. 1, Taf. XIV. 50. Æ plated; wt. 0.24 grm.

⁴ As Yatha' amar Watar (*C. I. S.*, iv. 490) and Watar Yuha'min (*ibid.*, iv. 10 and 258).

The Standard of the Coinage

As Kubitschek¹ has remarked, the standard in use was based on the Babylonian drachm of 5.6 grm. (86.4 grains troy). The highest weight recorded for coins of this denomination of the earlier class is 5.55 grm.²

On the other hand, among the coins of the Şan'â class we find the maximum of this denomination reaching 5.62 grm. (86.7 grn.).³

The maxima of the various denominations are given in grammes in the following table (based on the coins in the British Museum and Schlumberger's and Kubitschek's lists):

	Three units.	Unit.	Half.	Quarter.	Eighth.
Earlier Class	16.95	5.55	2.61	1.35	0.55
Transitional Class		5.41		1.48	
Şan'â Class		5.62	3.10	1.33	0.40

The high weight reached by the half in the Şan'â class is remarkable; but it is possible that the two coins at Vienna and Berlin,⁴ weighing 3.10 and 3.05 grm. respectively, are accidentally over-weighted, since otherwise the maximum of this group is 2.35 grm.⁵ The weight 0.16 grm. is reached by two small coins at Vienna,⁶ but the weights of these minute denominations are apt to be irregular, so that it is impossible to say what they represent.

The Berlin Museum, as already stated, possesses six⁷ coins of approximately the weight of the Attic tetradrachm (ranging from 16.95 to 16.35 grm.), imitated from the earlier Attic type, but differing from the smaller coins in the absence of any Sabaeen letter on the obverse. All appear to have come from South Arabia, having been acquired from Mordtmann and Glaser. A tetradrachm of purely Attic origin was acquired by the British Museum along with the Himyarite coins purchased from Salunjie of Aden. It is clear therefore that the Arabians were not only familiar with the Attic tetradrachm, but made imitations of it of somewhat low weight. Nevertheless, in consideration of the comparative rarity of these larger coins, and of the steady persistence of the piece of about 5.62 grm. as the dominant denomination throughout the period of the coinage, we are justified in regarding the latter as

¹ M. u. K., p. 66.

² Ibid., p. 76, no. 217.

³ A specimen in the British Museum.

⁴ M. u. K., p. 69, no. 12, and p. 76, no. 218.

⁵ British Museum specimen.

⁶ M. u. K., p. 69, nos. 8, 9.

⁷ Ibid., p. 76, nos. 474 and 183-7. One of these is the countermarked coin already mentioned.

the unit. The pseudo-Attic tetradrachm, as Kubitschek has pointed out, is a tridrachm expressed in terms of the piece of 5.62 grm. In the same way, in the little group of coins attributed below to the Minaeans, we have an Alexandrine Attic tetradrachm or Babylonian tridrachm of 16.72 grm.; but the relation to this of the two small denominations of respectively 1.78 and 0.41 grm. is difficult to conjecture.

The weights of the coins of the class with the bucranium reverse are very irregular, and the metal is frequently very base, so that any attempt to ascertain their standard is likely to be futile. Twenty-four specimens of which the weights are available range almost continuously from 0.30 to 3.58 grm.

The denominations employed for the latest class of Himyarite coins are so small that here again it is difficult to come to any conclusion about the standard.¹ The maximum weight seems to be 1.82 grm., which is reached by a coin of Shamnar Yehun'im. From this weight there is a fairly continuous decline to about 1.00 grm. The average weight of the coins weighing more than 1.00 grm. comes to about 1.45 grm., and a curve of frequency reaches its highest point at 1.50 to 1.69 grm. Taking the coins weighing less than 1.00 grm., we find another highest point in the curve of frequency at 0.70 to 0.89 grm., which would represent the half of the higher denomination, and a very distinctly highest point at 0.30-0.49 grm., which would represent the quarter. It is possible that the highest denomination corresponds to the old quarter, but as it is distinctly higher than that weight it may represent an attempt to bring the standard into relation to the Nabataean drachm. Three of these Himyarite coins weighing 4.35 grm. (on an average of 1.45 grm.) would be fairly equivalent to the Nabataean drachms of Obodas III (average 4.41 grm.) or Aretas IV (average 4.36 grm.).

MINAEAN COINAGE

The remarkable imitation of an Alexandrine tetradrachm in the Cabinet of the University of Aberdeen, the Arabian source of which was first recognized by Head,² stands quite apart from the rest of the South Arabian series in every particular except the script. I follow Head's description:

¹ It is unfortunate that Mordtmann's weighings of his coins are hard to reconcile with those given by Kubitschek for the coins acquired from Mordtmann by the Berlin Museum.

² *Num. Chron.*, 1880, pp. 303 ff.

Obv. Head of young Herakles right, in lion's skin. Border of dots.

Rev. אַבִּיָּתָה ('Abyatha') in the Himyarite character. Figure imitated from or rather suggested by the Zeus on the coins of Alexander, seated left on throne, his feet on footstool. He rests with his left arm on sceptre. The upper part of his body is naked, the lower limbs draped. The face is beardless, and the hair falls in curls, in the Arab fashion. In his right hand, instead of the eagle, he holds apparently a flower. Outside the inscription and parallel with the sceptre is a long perpendicular line of dots. In the field in front of the figure is the Himyarite letter *Alif*.

AR 8½ [30 mm.]. Wt. 258 gr. [16.72 grammes]. [Die-position Λ]. Pl. XV. 3 [here Pl. I. 18].

The apparent radiation round the head on the reverse seems to be due to creases in the impression from which the cast photographed by Head and the electrotype now in the British Museum were made.

The original Alexandrine from which this piece was imitated belonged to Müller's Class V. Head remarks that the original was doubtless struck about 200 B.C. We may date the coin itself to some time in the second century B.C.

Since this coin seems to belong to a different category from the other South Arabian coins, which form one connected series attributable to the Sabaean and Himyarite rulers, we are justified in looking for its origin in one of the other two great Arabian tribes, viz. the Minaeans or the Chatramotites. Now it happens that a typical Minaean name is אַבִּיָּדָה, 'Abyada'. Mordtmann has already remarked¹ that the Abyateh who was subdued by Assurbanipal in the middle of the seventh century B.C. must have been king of Ma'in, because his name, which is to be equated² with אַבִּיָּדָה, is peculiar to the Minaean royal race. We seem therefore to be justified in removing this coin from the Sabaean-Himyarite series and placing it in a separate class as Minaean. But to which of the kings 'Abyada' who are mentioned in the inscriptions it is to be attributed depends on the dates of those inscriptions, a question on which I do not feel competent to pronounce. D. H. Müller³ places 'Abyada' Yathi' in the second group of Minaean kings; if his third and last group was contemporary with the latest Himyarite dynasty of which we have coins (the fixed point among which is Karib'il, about

¹ *Z.D.M.G.*, xlv (1890), p. 183.

² The form אַבִּיָּתָה occurs in the Obne inscription; see Hommel, *Südarab. Chrestomathie*, p. 119.

³ *Burgen u. Schlösser*, as above, p. 1012. Müller's arrangement is disputed in certain details by Mordtmann, *Z.D.M.G.*, xlvii, pp. 407 ff. See further M. Hartmann, *Der islamische Orient*, ii, pp. 126 ff.

A.D. 70), then kings of his second group may possibly have been reigning during the second century B.C.¹

The reverse type of a small coin at Vienna² is also imitated from the Alexandrine coinage, with less modification than the tetradrachm above discussed; the obverse shows a bare male head, with short curly hair, and a skin (lion-skin?) fastened round his neck. Now this obverse is very close in style to the coin in the British Museum (Pl. I. 19) weighing 1.78 grm. (27.5 grn.), which it is very difficult to fit into the ordinary Sabaeen-Himyarite series. I am inclined, therefore, though of course quite tentatively, to place these two small coins along with the tetradrachm of 'Abyatha' in the Minaean group.

The ancient Minaean capital is probably represented by important ruins at Ma'in, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours east of El-Hazm Hamdan, in the middle Jauf.³ The ancient writers give Karna as the name of the capital. Important Minaean sites are also at Es Sud and Beraqish.⁴ These are all in the interior, whereas the statement of Eratosthenes that the Minaeans lived ἐν τῇ πρὸς Ἐρυθρὰν μέρει seems to point to the coast.⁵ Probably the geographer's use of the phrase merely implies south-western Arabia generally, which is bounded by the Arabian Gulf (the Red Sea in the modern acceptation) and the Gulf of Aden. Both these pieces of water were included by the ancients in the Red Sea.

To sum up: we have seen that the coinage of Southern Arabia Felix may be divided into (1) the coinage of the Sabaeen dynasty, merging into that of the Himyarites, with a small group that can be assigned with practical certainty to the Katabanians; (2) a small group which stands apart, and may be attributed to the Minaeans. It is doubtful whether any of the coinage is earlier than the third century B.C., although the Attic prototype is of the fourth century. The influence of Athens is dominant as regards morphology, that of

¹ The Minaean dynasty was still flourishing in the third century B.C., by the evidence of Eratosthenes (see Mordtmann in *Z.D.M.G.*, xlv, p. 184). Hartmann, *op. cit.*, p. 132, thinks it came to an end about 230 B.C.

² M. u. K., p. 70, Taf. XIV. 23. Wt. 0.41 grm. ($\frac{1}{10}$ of the Alexander drachm).

³ J. Halévy, *Rapport sur une mission archéologique dans le Yémen*, 1872, p. 75.

⁴ See Mordtmann in *Z.D.M.G.*, xlvii, p. 408; Ma'in = Qarnau, Beraqish = Yathil.

⁵ Glaser accordingly (*Abessinien*, p. 111) supposes that Eratosthenes cannot mean the Minaeans of the period of the Minaean kingdom, known from inscriptions, since these inhabited the Jauf; and that at most he could mean the Minaeans whom Pliny describes as living in the immediate neighbourhood of the frankincense country.

Persia in the standard. The coinage probably comes to an end in the second century of the Christian era.

These are the purely numismatic results of the enquiry. Are there any worth mentioning from a broader point of view? First, we may observe the almost entire absence of relations with Egypt. The trade route which brought the Attic coins to Yemen must have come down the western roads of the peninsula, more or less by the Pilgrims' route, from Syria and Southern Palestine. There is evidence, which is partly given below, of the circulation of Attic coins at an earlier period, i. e. in the fifth century, in Southern Palestine, the district round Gaza, and in the region round the Gulf of Akaba, or the Land of Midian. Thence the coinage gradually penetrated southwards. There seems to have been no connexion with Egypt. Second, the monetary standard in use points to relations with the dominant empire of the East, Persia. Here we have a curious parallel with the state of things which prevailed at Aradus in Phoenicia. There the influence of Athens is perceptible in two ways: first, in the general aspect of the coins; second, in the weight of a rare, if not unique, variety of the coinage, which is Attic, and which occupies the same place in relation to the rest of the Aradian issues of Babylonian or Persian standard, as the rare Sabaeen tetradrachms of Attic weight do in relation to the ordinary Sabaeen or Himyarite coins. We seem, in fact, in this dual origin of the coinage on the fringe of Hellenic civilization, to have another illustration of the familiar truth that the Greeks gave form and organization to the crude economic material already in existence in these districts. One other point of contact with the civilization of the region of the Persian Gulf is perhaps worth emphasizing. The origins which we have found for the symbols which are used on the Arabian coins show that the contact goes back to a very remote antiquity. It is curious to observe that in this distant 'sphere of influence' of Babylonia such symbols lingered on in a worn-down, perhaps no longer intelligible form, long after they had disappeared in the country of their origin.

NOTE ON IMITATIONS OF ATHENIAN COINS FROM NORTHERN
ARABIA FELIX

Head has published¹ a small group of very barbarous imitations of the earlier Attic type, some of which come from the Land of

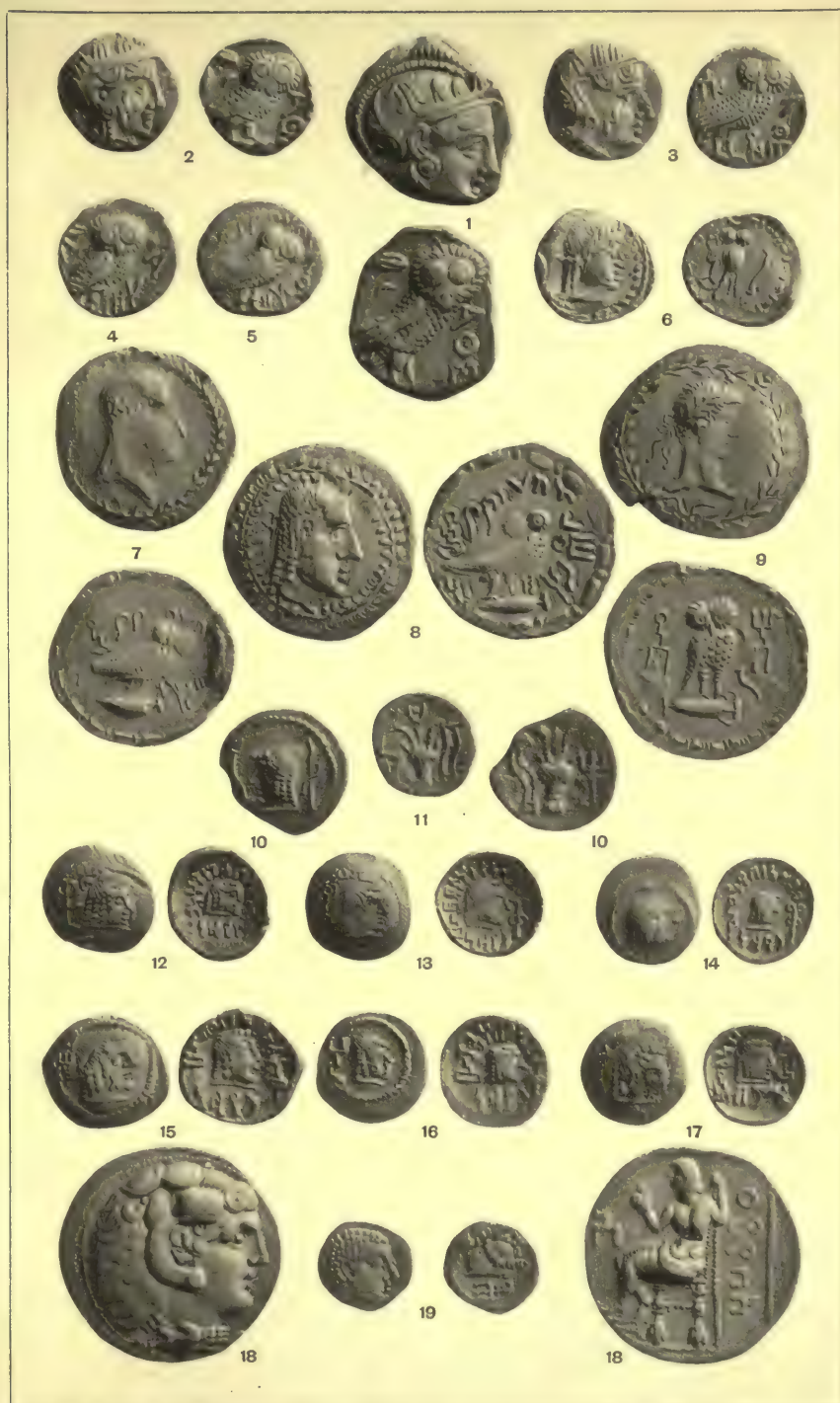
¹ *Num. Chron.*, 1878, pp. 274, 283, Pl. XIII. 17-22.

Midian. Although the Arabian provenance is only proved for the small denomination, they seem to belong to one class, and may therefore be described here. Burton obtained at Macna (Mukna) on the east coast of the Gulf of Aila an ancient plated coin copied from one of the earlier Attic tetradrachms. Unfortunately Head did not illustrate this, and it is not clear how precise he intended to be in describing it as of the same class as the coin next to be mentioned. This is now in the collection of Mr. J. Mavrogordato,¹ weighs 10.81 grm., and is of copper without trace of plating. It is said to have been found in Babylonia by Loftus. This is not in favour of its Arabian origin, though it may well have passed across the neck of the Arabian peninsula to the head of the Persian Gulf; but Head points out that it is the prototype of small coins which were acquired by Burton at Mukna'. On these the degradation has proceeded still farther, the types being almost unrecognizable, and the fabric similar to that of the small bronze coins of the Jewish rulers in the late second and first centuries B.C. 'Among them,' says Head, 'and at first sight hardly to be distinguished from the rest, I have found coins struck by the Maccabaeen princes, Alexander Jannaeus and Alexander II, a coin of Herod Archelaus, and several coins of Tiberius, one struck in A. D. 30 by Pontius Pilate, also a few coins of the Nabathaeen king, Aretas II, 7 B.C. to A. D. 40.'² Clearly then these imitations, although derived from the earlier Attic type, must have been made as late as the first century B.C., since their fabric is that of coins which would only have come into circulation in North Arabia in the last third of the second century.

The British Museum possesses another imitation of the Athenian tetradrachm which, although its provenance is not known, differs from any other Eastern imitations in certain peculiarities which seem to connect it with Mr. Mavrogordato's coin. These are, on the obverse, the large curve on the cheek under the eye, and, on the reverse, the treatment of the olive-spray, which, with a little more formalization might well develop into the form which it takes on Mr. Mavrogordato's coin. It still retains traces of the incuse square, and is evidently, to judge by the treatment of the eye, copied from a quite early variety of the Athenian coinage. It may, therefore, be tentatively regarded as an early example of the Arabian imitations circulating in the northern part of the peninsula.

¹ Who acquired it at the Philipsen Sale (Hirsch, *Katal.* XXV, lot 3075). The Photiades coin (Froehner's *Catalogue*, lot 785) seems to be something of the same kind.

² For the last words read 'Aretas IV, 9 B. C. to A. D. 40'.



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